Foods Can Help Protect Your Child From Lead Poisoning

If your children have been exposed to lead, you can protect them by making sure they eat well. Eating good foods will help their bodies fight lead poisoning. Children get lead poisoning because they have accidentally swallow small amounts of lead dust. Lead may be in part, dust, soil, drinking water and food. Children may take in dangerous amounts of lead because they often put their hands and other things in their mouth. Lead can damage the brain and other organs in young children.

Serve your child at least three meals a day

Children have higher risk of lead poisoning when:

* they have poor appetite;
* they have poor nutrition; or
* they do not eat regularly.

Poor nutrition and an empty stomach make the body absorb more lead. Feed your child well-balanced meals. If your child does not eat much at a time, let him or her eat smaller meals more often.

Serve your child healthy snacks

Healthy snacks help children with small appetites get enough food. It is hard for children with small appetite to eat enough food.

Follow these suggestions

• Always wash your children’s hand before they eat to wash off any lead dust.
• Keep areas clean where your child lives, play, eats and sleep.
• Keep your children from putting things that may contain lead in their mouths.
• Throw away food that has fallen on the floor or ground.
• Water from faucets may have lead in it. Let your water run for at least 30 seconds before you use it for drinking or cooking or drinking.
• Some imported pottery, china, crystal and handmade ceramics have lead. Use only lead-safe utensils for cooking or storing of food and drink.
• Do not give your children lead-containing folk medicines powders, such as greta and azarcon.
• Ask your child’s doctor for a blood lead test.

Foods with calcium and iron protect the body against lead

Foods with iron will help protect your child from lead poisoning by preventing the lead from being absorbed into the body. Vitamin C is important because it helps the body absorb more iron. The calcium in milk and other dairy foods also help prevent lead from being absorbed into the body. Children need 2 to 3 servings of milk or other dairy foods each day. More servings are not necessary. Children who drink too much milk are often not interested in eating other healthy foods.
Sources of Iron

beef  kidney  oyster  dried pears  wheat germ  whole wheat bread
lentils  dried prunes  dried apricots  lamb  spinach  iron fortified cereal
liver  turkey  sardines  molasses  enriched bread  dried beans
prune juice  dried peaches  greens  soybeans  dried peas

Sources of Vitamin C

oranges and orange juice  tomatoes  potatoes  cabbage
grapefruits and grapefruit juice  broccoli  strawberries  cauliflower
cantaloupe  red/green peppers  honeydew  chili peppers
tangerine  summer squash

Sources of Calcium

milk  pudding made with milk  yogurt  cheese
canned salmon with bones  canned sardine with bones  milk based soup  tofu

Healthy Snacks

These snacks ideas can help your children get the nutrients they need.

cheese cubes  saltine crackers with cheese  yogurt
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